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SIR
THOMAS OVERBURIES
VISION



GLASGOW:
PRINTED BY ROBERT ANDERSON,
22 ANN STREET.

SIR
THOMAS OVERBURIES
VISION

BY
RICHARD NICCOLS

1616

WITH INTRODUCTION BY MR. JAMES MAIDMENT.



PRIVATELY PRINTED

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INTRODUCTION.



WHEN the valuable library of the second Earl of Oxford was purchased by Thomas Osborne, the London bookseller, it contained a "collection of scarce, curious, and entertaining pamphlets and tracts," many of which were considered unique. Out of these was formed the "Harleian Miscellany," which extended to eight volumes 4to, and was published at London in yearly volumes, the last of which appeared about 1747.

In the preparation of this valuable work, Osborne had the good fortune to obtain the aid of William Oldys, Esquire, a man to whom his country is deeply indebted for many literary services, the merits and importance of which are better known and esteemed at the present date than they were in his own time. In the seventh volume of this collection will be found a reprint of "Sir Thomas Overburie's Vision; with the Ghosts of Weston," &c., of which Oldys gives the following abstract:—"This is a Poem composed in our Epic verse, and, as may be gather'd from the seventeenth page, by the author of the additional Legends in that edition of the 'Myrror for Magistrates,' which was printed in 4to, 1610, whose name was Richard Niccols. It is perhaps with some impropriety entitled 'Sir Thomas Overburie's Vision,' for it is indeed the vision or dream of the author, upon whose imagination the Trial of Sir Thomas's Murderers in Guild-Hall, where he had heard it, made such impresson that Sir Thomas appeared to him at night in his sleep, and led him to the Tower, and there relates how barbarously he was treated

* Vol. VIII., Catalogue of Pamphlets in the Harleian Library, No. 231, p. 61.

INTRODUCTION.

for his faithful services to his Master, (Robert Carr, Earl of Somerfet.) There is a wooden print of Sir Thomas, his Ghost, and he concludes his tale with a request that our Author should transmit to posterity his true tragedy. Then, as they are looking towards Traytor's Bridge, they see under the Arch the Ghost of Weston arise out of the Thames, and he tells the Story of his Guilt in a penitential manner; and here we have his picture, with a halter about his neck. After whom appears, in the same place, Mrs. Turner, whose figure, in like manner also, is attended with her confession. To her succeeds Sir Garvis Ellwis, Lieutenant of the Tower, and after him, Franklin: each in a print, attended with their speech. When the last sinks down, Sir Thomas winds up the whole with a Panegyrick upon the King's Justice, in bringing his said Murderers (except the two Noble Chiefs) to execution, and with prayers that Heaven would confound all treasonable attempts against him and the State: Here the Author wakes, and so ends his Vision."

This abstract of the poem is substantially correct, but the version itself in the Miscellany has the defect of modernizing the language, and omitting the woodcuts, which are singularly interesting; and as Niccols must have seen the unhappy sufferers during their trials, may be presumed to possess some resemblance to the criminals. The woodcut of Mrs. Turner, whose confession is so pathetically expressed, and in which so many beautiful passages occur, is particularly attractive, and has been very accurately copied in the present reprint.

The late Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., had in his library a rare tract, entitled "The Just Downfall of Ambition, Adultery, and Murder," printed at London, small 4to. On the title-page there is a rude cut of Mrs. Turner, of which a copy was etched by that gentleman, and prefixed, with other similar cuts, to the reprint of an unpublished work, entitled "The Whore's Rhetoric,"* originally printed, London, 12mo,

* Edinburgh, 4to, 1836.

INTRODUCTION.

1683. There is no resemblance whatever between the two wood engravings.

It is evident neither Anthony à Wood, nor, at a more recent period, Haslewood, ever saw a copy of the original edition of "Sir Thomas Overburies Vision," which is of extreme rarity, and of which there is no copy in the library of the British Museum, or in that of the Faculty of Advocates. Neither did Mr. Amos; who, in his elaborate work, entitled "The Great Oyer of Poisoning,"* has quoted several portions of the poem, from the "Harleian Miscellany, Vol. VII." This learned gentleman, albeit a lawyer and a member of the Supreme Council of India, duly appreciated the poetical merits of Niccols, for he ventures to say, "The student of English poetry will read with much interest several of the lines; which, if he had not been apprized of their date, he would probably have supposed to have been written after the period of Waller and Denham."

"Richard Niccolls," says Anthony à Wood, "esteemed eminent for his poetry in his time, was born [about the year 1584] of genteel parents in London, and at eighteen years of age, an. 1602, was entered a student in Mag. coll. in Michaelmas term; but making little stay there he retired to Mag. hall, and took the degree of bach. of arts in 1606, being then numbred among the ingenious persons of the university. After he had remained there for some time he retired to the great City, obtained an employment suitable to his faculty, and at length honoured the devotees to poetry with these things following," &c.†

Haslewood, in his reprint of the "Mirror for Magistrates,"‡ says that Niccols, who had published an edition of that popular Miscellany in 1610, with the text of which he had ventured to take liberties, had, when about twelve years of

* London, 8vo, 1846, p. 49.

† Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, edited by Dr. Bliss, London, 4to, 1815, Vol. II., p. 166.

‡ London, 4to, 1815, Vol. I., p. 14.

INTRODUCTION.

age, embarked in a vessel called the "Ark," which failed with the expedition against Cadiz in June, 1596, and was present at the great and complete victory obtained by sea and land on that occasion. Whether this voyage was the result of boyish ardour, or that he was originally intended to be actually employed for his country in either marine or military service, is not known.

He appears on his return to have resumed his studies, and in 1602 was entered a student in Magdalen College, Oxford. He took the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1606, and was then esteemed among the "ingenious persons of the University." In 1610 he impliedly says he should have continued the "Mirror for Magistrates" further, if his own affairs would have suffered him to proceed, but being called away by other employments, he of force left the completion to others. What designation these employments gave him for the remainder of his life, beyond that of a poet, is not known. In that character his talents would appear overrated by Headley, who considered him "a poet of great elegance and imagination," had not Warton unwittingly gone farther. Niccols, on reprinting the "Induction," found the rhyme too perfect, and the language too polished, to allow the attempting of any of his supposed emendations, but towards the conclusion of the poem, he was bold enough to reject one stanza, and foist in four of his own composing; and it is to his credit that Warton, in analysing the whole, reprinted two of these as the genuine production of Sackville. Such a compliment cannot be exceeded. He published the "Cuckow," 4to, 1607, and he says,

"And *Cuckow*-like of Castles wrongs in rustick tunes did sing."

He reprinted the "Mirror for Magistrates" in 1610, edited in a manner that left his volume without any value but for the adding his own poems, viz., first, the "Fall of Princes," and last, "A Winters Nights Vision." This Vision was com-

INTRODUCTION.

posed probably as long before as August, 1603, as that was the last calamitous year when the plague ravaged extensively previous to its being published. On that occasion our author retired for safety to Greenwich, where, wandering through the walks long favoured by Elizabeth, the circumstance of it being her natal place, combined with her then recent death, appears to have awakened his youthful muse to attempt this metrical history of her life, "Expicedium. A Funeral Oration upon the death of the late deceased Princeesse, of famous memorye, Elizabeth," &c., 4to, 1603. He also wrote the "Three Sisters Teares. Shed at the late Solemne Funerals of the Royall deceased Henry, Prince of Wales," &c., 4to, 1613; "The Fvries. With Vertves Encomium, Or the Image of Honour. In two Bookes of Epigrammes," &c., 8vo, 1614; "Monodia or Walthams Complaint, vpon the death of that most Vertuous and Noble Ladie, late deceased the Lady Honor Hay," &c., 8vo, 1615; "Londons Artillery, briefly containing the noble practise of that wo[r]thie Societie," &c., 4to, 1616. (For an account of this poem, see "British Bibliographer," Vol. I., p. 363.) "Sir Thomas Overbvries Vision," &c., 4to, 1616, reprinted in the "Harleian Miscellany," 1811, Vol. VII., p. 178. The author makes the Ghost of Overbury, in his address to him, say—

" (*O thou mortall wight*)

Whose mournfull Muse, but whilome did recite

Our Brittain Princes, and their wofull fates

In that true (*Mirroure for our Magistrates.*)"

His last work is "The Beggars Ape," &c., 4to, 1627.

As an able bibliographer, Haslewood deserves great commendation, but we are not prepared to assign much weight to his poetical criticisms, which show that he had not drank deeply of the Castalian Spring. He was a zealous follower of the dry-as-dust school of the period, and rather preferred collating the different editions of the "Mirror for Magistrates" than enjoying its beauties. Headley, on the other hand, whose

INTRODUCTION.

high opinion was founded exclusively upon Niccols' contributions to the "Mirror"—for he apparently had never seen the "Vifion"—was a poet himself; and his "Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry, with Remarks," published originally in 1787, when he was only twenty-two years of age, afford ample evidence of his elegant poetical taste, and his great critical ability.*

The accession of the Royal Family of Stewart to the Throne of England did not realize the anticipations of those who imagined a union of the two kingdoms would be beneficial to both. The Scots were discontented at the absence of the King and Court, whilst the English, during the entire reign of James, had but little cause for rejoicing at the presence of a Monarch who dissipated the resources of the country on his favourites, whose manners were unkingly, and whose habits were gross and sensual. His reign in England, which commenced on 24th March, 1603, and terminated on 27th March, 1625, to borrow an epithet of modern days, was throughout a sensational one.

Although James met with a hearty welcome from his new subjects, and was flattered and feasted to his heart's content, these halcyon days gradually passed away; and after two years of a deceitful calm, a combination of malcontents was forming, whose object it was to destroy the King, Lords, and Commons, by what is known as the Gunpowder Plot. His Majesty was flattered by the courtiers for the good things he scattered amongst them; but by the gentry, as well as commonality, was held in little estimation, and the contrast drawn between him and his predecessor was certainly not to his advantage. The only manly pastime of his Majesty was the chase, in which he frequently indulged, carefully guarded by a retinue of followers to protect him from harm. He had a taste for masques and pageants; patronised tilts, but seldom

* He died on the 15th of November, 1788, in the twenty-third year of his age.

INTRODUCTION.

personally ventured to run a course. To females he was cold, but an admirer of male beauty.

When he left Scotland, James took with him, as a Groom of the Chamber, a young man named Preston, of an ancient family, neither noble nor rich, but active, handsome, and well educated. During the tournaments, so frequently exhibited at Court, probably more for the gratification of Anne of Denmark than the delectation of her timid husband, Preston distinguished himself by his agility and the skill he displayed in managing his steed. He was, upon the occasion of his Majesty's coronation, 25th July, 1603, made a Knight of the Bath. Subsequently he received a Scottish Peerage, under the title of Lord Dingwall, 8th June, 1609; and upon obtaining the hand of the Viscountess of Tilliophelim, the only surviving child of the Earl of Ormond, and the youthful widow of the apparent heir-male of that noble family, was created Earl of Desmond in Ireland.

Favoured as Lord Dingwall continued to be by James and his Queen, it was his fate to be eclipsed by another youth from the North, whose fair proportion of body and beauty of countenance the Monarch found it impossible to resist.

It is strange that the new favourite was brought under the notice of James by the old one. Dingwall, being ordered by the King to perform at a courtly tilting, having a regard for Robert Car or Ker, a son of the Laird of Fernihurst—from his being, like himself, a native of Scotland, and from his “comely visage” and “courtly preference”—preferred him to carry the device to the King, according to the usual custom. When he should have lighted from his horse to perform his office, the animal started back, threw him down, and broke his leg.* James, learning that his name was Ker, and that he was one of his pages, caused him to be taken into the

* See Osborne's Traditionary Memoir in the Secret History of the Court of James I., edited by Sir Walter Scott, Edin., 8vo, 1811, Vol. I., p. 375.

INTRODUCTION.

Court, and attended to carefully until he recovered from his hurt. Wilson, in his life of James, mentions that his Majesty "visited him often during his necessitated restraint sometimes an hour or more, conversing with him to sound him and know what he was; and though he found no great depth of literature and experience, yet such a smooth and calm outside made him think there might be a good and fit anchorage for his most retired causes."

In a most amusing letter by Thomas Howard, subsequently Earl of Suffolk, to Sir John Harrington of Kelston,* after instructing his friend as to his behaviour when he came to Court, he thus described the ruling favourite, "Car hath all favours, as I told you before; the King teacheth him Latin every morning, and I think some one should teach him English too; for, as he is a Scottish lad, he hath much need of better language. The King doth much covet his presence; the Ladies too are not behind-hand in their admiration; for I tell you, good Knight, this fellow is straight-limbed, well-favoured, strong-shouldered, and smooth-faced, with some sort of cunning and show of modesty; tho', God wot, he well knoweth when to shew his impudence." This worthy nobleman did not then imagine he was subsequently to be a party to the unhallowed espousals of his profligate daughter to the "Scottish lad."

During the period that Somerset was thus climbing the ladder of promotion, his ascent was materially aided by Sir Thomas Overbury, whose judicious advice and affectionate anxiety was of incalculable value to him. His counsellor was an accomplished gentleman, who had travelled, seen Courts, and wrote in verse as well as prose. When at the pinnacle of power, Car threw down the ladder by which he had mounted. He had been fascinated by the beauty and address of an unprincipled female, the Lady Frances Howard, daughter of Sir

* Nichols' Progresses of James I., London, 4to, 1828, Vol. II., p. 413.

INTRODUCTION.

John Harrington's correspondent, who had been married when almost a child to the youthful Earl of Essex—the son of the unfortunate favourite of Queen Elizabeth.

Upon the 25th of March, 1611, Car, styled “son to Thomas Car, Laird of Fernihurst,” was created Viscount Rochester at Whitehall, with great ceremony. Upon the 21st of April following, “Sir Thomas Overbury, having offended his friend Car, was first imprisoned” in the Tower.*

Overbury had previously been the “Pythias” of “Car,” and in order to influence him, his father had been made, through the Howards, a Welsh judge; the son, “naturally of an insolent spirit, which was elevated by being so intimate with the favourite, and wholly having ingrossed that commodity, which could not be retailed but by him and his favor; with a kind of scorn neglected their friendships, yet made use of both.”†

Sir Anthony Weldon informs his readers that the Earls of Northampton and Suffolk, the latter his nephew, and both Howards, unable to influence Overbury as they desired, took other means of accomplishing what they wanted by means of a “‘Moabitish woman,’ a daughter of the Earle of Suffolk, married to a young noble gentleman, the Earle of Essex.” This was the Lady Frances, second daughter of Thomas, Earl of Suffolk. Her elder sister, Elizabeth, was the wife of William Knollys, Earl of Banbury, an aged nobleman, upon whose death two male children were produced as born of the marriage; but their legitimacy was not allowed, and the Earldom of Banbury thereby became extinct.

A meeting was brought about at the house of a depraved person of the name of Coppinger, who, though originally of good fortune and family, had become thoroughly degraded, but was a friend of both the Howards, and a very suitable person for what followed. These love passages between Car

* Nichols' Progresses of James I., Vol. II., p. 416.

† Secret History of the Court of James I., Vol. I., pp. 376-7-8.

INTRODUCTION.

and Lady Frances came to the ears of Overbury, "that John Baptist that reproved the Lord for the sin of using the lady, and abusing the young Earl of Essex; would call her strumpet, her mother and brother bawds, and used them with so much scorne, as in truth was not to be endured from a fellow of his rank, to persons of that quality, how faulty soever otherwise they were.

"Then, to satisfie Overbury, and blot out the name of sin, his love led him into a more desperate way, by a resolution to marry another mans wife. Against this then did Overbury bellow louder, and in it, shewed himself more like an affectionate than a discreet and moderate friend: had he compounded but one dram of discretion with an ounce of affection, he might with such a receipt have preserved his own life, and their fortunes and honors." *

The first step to remove Overbury was to influence the King against him, and this was not very difficult to effect. It was arranged that he should be sent as Ambassador to Russia. If he accepted the appointment, he was removed from all interference with the shameful proceedings in progress. If he refused, then he incurred the displeasure of James, an act of contempt, for which he could expect nothing less than imprisonment. He rejected the appointment, and was committed to the Tower, which he never left alive; this imprisonment was exactly twenty-seven days after his perfidious friend had been created Viscount of Rochester.

Whether Damon contemplated what was to follow the incarceration of the once beloved Pythias is uncertain. That he was a party to the commitment to the Tower is plain, but at any time a single word to James would have procured a remission of the sentence. After a careful consideration of the evidence adduced on the trial of the parties implicated in Overbury's murder, there does not appear any proof that

* Secret History of the Court of James I., Vol. I., p. 379.

INTRODUCTION.

Somerfet was at all cognizant of the intended murder. Of the guilt of his wife there is not the shadow of a doubt. She was the originator and prime mover, and as vindictive as she was profligate; she prolonged the sufferings of her victim until the latest moment, when nature could sustain the poisonous attack no longer, and Overbury expired—the victim of a falacious woman.

Whilst Overbury was in durance vile, proceedings were instituted for annulling the marriage between Lady Frances Howard and the Earl of Essex; and a course of investigation passed, not to be paralleled in any civilized country, in which the King himself performed a prominent part. What was done in this iniquitous affair will be found in Osborne's "Traditionary Memoirs," to which the reader is referred. Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, opposed the whole proceedings, and protested against them, by which he incurred the Royal displeasure, "and dyed in the disgrace of the king on earth, though in favour with the king of kings."

Sir Thomas Overbury died on the 15th of September, 1613, and was buried in the Tower about the same time the marriage of the Earl of Essex and Lady Frances was pronounced a nullity. "The morning that the matter was to be decided, the King sent an express commandment [to the judges] that in opening they should not argue nor use any reason, but only give their assent or dissent." In the sentence all that is said is that the marriage was null,* *propter latens et incurabile impedimentum*.†

On the 26th December following, this unhappy marriage was consummated, for which the "family of Suffolk paid dear in aftertime, and had sower sawce to that sweet meat of their great son-in-law."‡ The writer continues, "Surely he was the

* Nichols' Progresses of James I., Vol. II., p. 678. The vote was seven for the divorce, and five against it.

† Notwithstanding this "impedimentum," Lord Essex married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Paulet, by whom he had a son, Robert, who died young.

‡ Secret History of the Court of James I., Vol. I., p. 390.

INTRODUCTION.

most unfortunate man in that marriage, being as generally beloved for himselfe and disposition, as hated afterwards for his linking himselfe in that family; for in all the time of this mans favor, before this marriage, he did nothing obnoxious to the state, or any base thing for his private gain; but whether it was his own nature that curbed him, or that there was then a brave prince living, and a noble queene that did awe him, we cannot so easily judge, because, after this marriage and their death, he did many ill things."

Whilst Overbury, a close prisoner in the Tower, was gradually sinking under the poisons administered to him from day to day by the agents of the future Countess of Somerset, his murderer was taking measures to dissolve her marriage with the Earl of Essex. The King, still infatuated with his favourite, and influenced by the lady's father, Suffolk, and her grand-uncle Northampton, gave his countenance to the step. With his authority, and probably acting under his advice—for James prided himself on his legal knowledge*—a jury of matrons was summoned for preliminary investigation; and the lady, judging it preferable to appear by proxy, induced a young female about her own figure, and attired in one of her dresses, to take her place, closely veiled, no doubt to hide her blushes. The perfonation succeeded admirably; the matrons and their venerable ecclesiastical and legal assessors present for the occasion concurred in opinion, and declared her to be "*Virgo intacta*." It was presumed this decision would have negatived the *fama clamosa* which had previously damaged the character of this high-born lady. But although it satisfied Royalty, and afforded ground for the proceedings which speedily followed, the public was not satisfied, ridiculed all the actors

* In the "Miscellany of the Abbotsford Club," Vol. I., p. 195, there is a remarkable proof of this, being no less than a learned award or decret arbitral, prepared by the King as to the succession to the Barony of Sanguhar, the original of which is corrected throughout in his well-known handwriting. It is a very elaborate and able document. The original MS. is in the library of the Faculty of Advocates.

INTRODUCTION.

in this disgusting drama, and applied to the principal performer the coarsest epithets.*

On the 26th of December, 1613, the bridegroom, having been previously created Earl of Somerset, became husband of Lady Frances Howard. "The Dean of the Chapel coupled them; which fell out strangely that the same man should marry the same person in the same place, upon the self-same day (after eight years), the former party yet living. All the difference was, that the King gave her the last time, and now her father. The King and Queen were both present, and tasted wafers and hypocrites as at ordinary weddings." The Dean of the Chapel was Dr. Montague, Bishop of Bath and Wells.†

Gifford, who has printed the masque performed upon occasion of the marriage of the Earl of Essex and the Lady Frances Howard in 1606, in his valuable edition of the works of Ben Jonson,‡ compliments him for not prostituting his muse upon occasion of the new espousals of Lady Frances by any production in honour of these infamous nuptials. For this strange error he has been justly taken to task by Nichols, who, in the valuable work just referred to, is surprised "that Mr. Gifford should congratulate himself and his readers that Jonson was *not* employed at all in the celebration of the present ill-omened Marriage." Now, it is proved beyond doubt that he was *doubly* employed, both in "The Challenge at Tilt at a Marriage," 1613, and in the "Irish Masque." As both these are printed by Gifford, it must be presumed he never read either the one or the other, for the *internal* evidence proves at once for what marriage they were intended.§

What was there wonderful in Jonson, like other poets of the day, who even in our times are not overburdened with riches, taking money for placing his poetical services at the pleasure

* The young lady's name, as given by Sir Anthony Weldon, was Fines—probably Fiennes.—*Secret History of the Court of James I.*, Vol. I., p. 389.

† Nichols' *Progresses of James I.*, Vol. II., p. 725.

‡ London, 8vo, 1816, Vol. VII., p. 46.

§ See Appendix.

INTRODUCTION.

of the King on an occasion which afforded royalty much gratification. At this time the murder of Overbury had not come to light, and Somerset, backed by the Howards, was in the ascendant. The Countess, notwithstanding her damaged reputation, was the queen of beauty, and worshipped at Court. Could it be imagined that Jonson would alone refuse to contribute to the general amusement, because of the very extraordinary and unheard of, but legal, procedure which had dissolved her previous matrimonial vow? Would James have overlooked and forgiven a refusal on the part of his Poet-Laureate?

Somerset, believing his influence over the King would be perpetual, gradually lost his popularity; and the Howards, who proposed through his means to rule, became disgusted when they found how little he was inclined to benefit them. His haughtiness and presumption offended Anne of Denmark, and irritated her husband, whilst the courtiers who hated the Scottish parvenu formed a party for his destruction.

With this intention, they selected a young man of the name of Villiers, whose personal beauty it was expected would attract the notice of James. Nor were they disappointed in their anticipations. Before proceeding to open hostilities, Villiers offered himself as a suppliant, and solicited the patronage of the favourite, who rejected his offer of service with scorn. War was the consequence, and the downfall of Somerset followed. The fallen favourite should have remembered how he had supplanted Dingwall, who, seeing his reign was past, prudently resigned what he had no power to retain, and by so doing preserved the favour of the King. It was Somerset's attempt to oppose the pleasure of the Monarch that brought to light the murder of Overbury, which probably otherwise might have been entirely overlooked.

As the facts are fully detailed in the State Trials, as well as in the "Great Oyer of Poisoning," which we have already noticed, it appears unnecessary to do more than refer to these works

INTRODUCTION.

for such further information as may be required on the subject of this most horrible murder, its discovery and the proceedings adopted to bring all implicated in it to trial, and the punishment of the murderers. The Countess pleaded guilty; but her husband, who was tried after her, pointedly denied his guilt, and assuredly, if the trial had taken place in Scotland, where the English dislike of the Scots would not have had any effect, the verdict could only have been one of "Not proven."

Of the inferior culprits, the only one who suffered unjustly was Sir Gervaise Elwes, who met with scrimp justice, as there was no evidence to shew his knowledge of the administration of poisoned food. He was a man held in general estimation, and had in those evil times, what was not very common, a reputation free from stain.

Irrespective of the great poetical merits of "Sir Thomas Overburies Vision," it derives peculiar interest from affording a contemporaneous description, accompanied by portraitures, of the unhappy persons who were brought to the scaffold for acting as agents of the Countess in her atrocious and vindictive proceedings.

Weston was brought to trial upon the 19th October, 1615, and, being found guilty, was afterwards executed. Mrs. Turner was tried and convicted on the 7th November, 1615, when the Lord Chief Justice Coke, the celebrated commentator on Littleton, before the jury retired to consider their verdict, told the unhappy woman that "she had the seven deadly sins, viz., a whore, a bawd, a forcerer, a witch, a papist, a felon, a murderer, the daughter of the Devil For-man; wishing her to repent, and become a Servant of Jesus Christ, and to pray to him to cast out of her those seven Devils." On the 14th November following, she was executed. Sir Gervaise Elwes was brought to trial on the 16th November, and convicted; and Franklin was in like manner convicted on the 27th November following, and both thereafter executed.

INTRODUCTION.

Of the treatment of the prisoners by the Court, a specimen has been given in the case of Mrs. Turner, from which it may be inferred that her partners in guilt were dealt with in a similar manner. Against Elwes there was no *legal* evidence of accession, and to a gentleman of birth, education, and good character, the insults offered to him must have been even worse than the sentence of death, afterwards pronounced upon him. "Poor Mrs. Turner," as Weldon designates her,* "Weston, and Franklyn began the tragedy, Mrs. Turners day of mourning being better than the day of her birth, for she dyed very penitently, and shewed much modesty in her last act, which is to be hoped was accepted with God. After that dyed Weston, and then was Franklyn arraigned, who confessed that Overbury was smothered to death, not poysoned to death, though he had poyson given him."

This account of the last moments of Anne Turner is quite in unison with the beautiful verses of Niccols, in which the unhappy woman, by the penitential confession of her sins, and her sincere contrition, appeals to the sympathy of her auditors.†

Somerſet and his wife were brought to trial in 1616. She was tried on the 24th of May, and was convicted upon her own confession. Her husband next day boldly asserted his innocence, nevertheless was found guilty by a jury composed of men who had previously made up their minds to convict him.

The "Vision" is dated in 1616, but has neither the name of the printer nor publisher. Nor is the place of sale given. As it says nothing about the conviction of the two principal culprits, it may be assumed that it was composed and circulated in the interval between the execution of Franklyn and the trial of the Countess. It is conjectured to have not been printed for sale, Niccols being by no means certain what use my

* Secret History of the Court of James I., Vol. I., p. 416.

† Amos, p. 223.

INTRODUCTION.

Lord Chief Justice Coke, "the very quintessence of law," as Weldon farcally calls him, might have made of it. This may explain its extreme rarity.

The portraits may be assumed to bear some resemblance to the parties intended to be represented, as Niccols was not a person, from his position, likely to palm any fictitious heads upon his readers, many of whom must have been familiar with their features.

The Countess did not follow her victims to the scaffold, but received a pardon, which was no act of mercy, for, parted forever from her husband, she lived and died in a state of the greatest wretchedness and misery, excluded from all intercourse with the world, and debarred access to her only child, born whilst confined in the Tower, and named Anne after the Queen. Amongst the Domestic Papers in the State Paper Office, November 17, 1615, there is preserved this interesting notice,* signed "W. Smithe:"—"The Countess of Somerset laying her hand on her belly said, if I were rid of this burden, it is my death that is looked for, and my death they shall have." The child was taken from her, and brought up in the paths of virtue. Her mother died whilst she was young, and every care was taken to prevent knowledge of her crimes reaching her daughter's ears. Neither was she allowed to breathe the foul atmosphere of the Court, until it received purification after the accession of Charles I., who, with all his faults, gave no countenance to vice and irreligion.

The Masques, so popular in the reign of Elizabeth and James, were equally so in the reign of Charles, whose Queen, Henrietta, not only occasionally took part in them herself, but induced her husband to do so also. In the year 1634, "The Temple of Love," by Inigo Jones and William Davenant, was performed by the Queen's Majesty and her Ladies at Whitehall on Shrove Tuesday. Amongst the latter was Lady

* Amos, p. 28.

INTRODUCTION.

Anne Carr, then about nineteen years of age. Her future husband, Lord Ruffel, was one of the noble "Persian Youths" present on this occasion; and it may be surmised that it was during this performance the graces of the lady originated that affection which, three years afterwards, brought about her marriage with William, Lord Ruffel, created Duke of Bedford after the Revolution, and who died in the eighty-seventh year of his age, on the 7th of September, 1700.

"Fathers have flinty hearts," it is said, and Francis, fourth Earl of Bedford, was no exception to the adage. Neither the charms, nor, what were preferable, the virtues of the lady, could efface the guilt of her mother, or induce the noble Earl to consent to the nuptials, though urged to do so by the King and Queen. Plutus did what royalty could not. The Earl of Somerset, to his credit be it spoken, sacrificed the remains of his fortune, which seems to have been greater than is usually supposed, and the lovers were made happy by a payment to the Earl of £12,000, a very large sum in those days.

The eldest son of this marriage is historically known as William, Lord Ruffel, who unjustly suffered in 1683 for his alleged participation in what is called the Rye House Plot. His descendant, the Duke of Bedford, is thus the lineal heir and representative of the Earl and Countess of Somerset.

Somerset was entitled to the pardon he received from the Monarch by whom he was once so much beloved—for there was no legal evidence whatever of his participation in the guilty practices of the Countess. If he had followed the example shown him by his original patron, Lord Dingwall, in his own case, and quietly allowed George Villiers to take his place in the King's affection, the murder of Overbury would never have been brought to light.

The present reprint is a facsimile—page for page, and line for line—of the original, in the possession of Mr. Alexander Young, of Glasgow.

J. M.

EDINBURGH.

APPENDIX.

THE following Lines and Note are taken from Mr. Henry Huth's "INEDITED POETICAL MISCELLANIES, 1584-1700" (printed for private circulation, 8vo, 1870):—

[UPON THE MARRIAGE OF ROBERT CAR, EARL OF
SOMERSET AND FRANCES, COUNTESS OF ESSEX.¹]

TO THE MOST NOBLE, AND ABOVE HIS TITLES,
ROBERT, EARLE OF SOMERSET.

They are not those, are present wth they^r face,
And clothes, & guifts, that only do thee grace
At these thy nuptials; but whose heart and thought
Do wayte vpon thee, and they^r love not bought.
Such weare true wedding robes and are true Freindes,
That bid, God giue thee ioy, and haue no endes.
Wth I do, early, vertuous Somersfet,
And pray thy ioyes as lasting bee as great.
Not only this, but euery day of thine,
Wth the fame looke or wth a better shine.
May she whome thou for spouse to day dost take,
Out-bee y^t Wife in worth thy freind did make:
And thou to her, that Husband, may exalt
Hymens amends to make it worth his fault.

¹ Believed to be unpublished: nor can the reason for their suppression be otherwise than obvious. These lines were seemingly written, in Jonson's familiar autograph, on the original flyleaf of a copy of one of the folio editions of his *Workes*, published in 1616, and have been subsequently pasted on to the modern flyleaf of a copy of the folio of 1640. At the top of the page, in a different but probably coeval hand, occurs this memorandum: 'These verses were made by the

APPENDIX.

So be there never discontent or forrow
 To rise wth eyther of you on the morrow.
 So be yo^r Concord still as deepe as mute;
 And eue'ry ioy in mariage turne a fruite.
 So may those Marriage-Pledges comforts proue:
 And eu'ry birth encrease the heate of Loue.
 So in they^r number may [you] never see
 Mortality, till you [im]mortall bee.
 And when your yeares rise more then would be told,
 Yet neyther of you seeme to th' other old.
 That all y^t view you then, and late, may say,
 Sure this glad payre were marrie'd but this day.

BEN: JONSON.

author of this booke, and were deliuered to the Earle of Somersett vpon his Lo: wedding day: they are written by his owne hand.' * * * * The tone which the present lines breathe is one certainly of extravagant, but we are scarcely, perhaps, warranted in adding *hypocritical*, laudation. Singularly enough, at a later period, when the fortunes of Car, as well as his fame, had suffered an irrecoverable fall, a fellow-countryman, Robert Farley, dedicated to him with the most disinterested devotion a little book of emblems.¹ The copy of Jonson's *Works*, 1640, from which the present inedited lines have been derived, is in the British Museum, for which it was purchased several years ago at Sotheby's auction-rooms.

¹ [This rare volume is entitled "KALENDARIVM HVMANÆ VITÆ THE KALENDER OF MANS LIFE. Authore Roberto Farlao, Scoto Britanio. LONDON Printed for William Hope, and are to be sould at y^e vnicorne neare the Royall Exchange. 1638." 8vo. The dedication to Somersett is in Latin. Mr. Maidment is in possession of a presentation by the Faculty of Advocates and Writers to the Signet to a burfary in their gift for the education of indigent scholars in the University of Edinburgh, dated 27th February, 1622, from which it appears that Robert Fairlie sone lawfull to umquhile Robert Fairlie, Goldsmith, burgh of Edinburgh, succeeded Alexander Steven the last possessor who had "passed his cours of philosophie." The document has twenty-nine signatures.]



Sir
THOMAS OVERBURIES
Vision.

With the ghaasts of *Weston, M^{rs}. Turner*, the late *Lieftenant* of the Tower, and *Franklin*.

By *R. N. Oxon.*

---In pœnam insectatur & umbra.



PRINTED FOR *R. M. & T. I.* 1616.





SIR THOMAS OVERBURIES
Vision.

W Hen poyson (O that poyson and foule wrong,
Should euer be the subiect of my song!)

Had set loud Fame vpon a loftie wing,
Throughout our streetes with horrid voice to sing
Those vncouth tidings, in each itching eare,
How raging lust of late, too soone did beare
That monster murder, who once brought to light,
Did slay the man whose vision I recite:
Then did th' inconstant vulgar day by day,
Like feathers in the wind, blowne euery way,
Frequent the ^a *Forum*, where in thickest throng,
I one amongst the rest did passe along
To heare the iudgement of the wise, and know
That late blacke deede, the cause of mickle woe:
But from the reach of voice too farre compel'd,
That beast of many heads I there beheld,
And did obserue how euerie common drudge,

a Guildhall.

Affum'd the perfon of an awefull Iudge:

A defcription
of the vulgar.

Here in the hall amidft the throng one ftands
Nodding his head, and acting with his hands,
Discourfing how the poyfons fwift or flow
Did worke, as if their nature he did knowe:
An other here, prefuming to outftrippe
The reft in funder iudgement, on his lippe
His finger layes, and winketh with one eye,
As if fome deeper plot he could defcrie:
Here foure or five, that with the vulgar fort
Will not impart their matters of import,
Withdraw and whifper, as if they alone
Talk't things that muft not vulgarly be knowne;
And yet they talke of naught from morne till noone
But wonders, and the fellowe in the moone:
Here fome excufe that which was moft amiffe;
Others doe there accufe, where no crime is,
Accufing that which they excuf'd anon,
Inconftant people, neuer conftant known:
Cenfure from lippe to lippe did freely flie,
He that knew nothing, with the reft would crie,
The voice of iudgement; every age fhall finde

Th' igno-

Th' ignoble vulgar cruell, mad in minde:
The muddie spawne of euery fruitlesse braine,
Daub'd out in ignominious lines, did staine
Papers in each mans hand, with rayling rimes
Gainst the foule Actors of these wel-knowne crimes:
Base wittes, like barking cures, to bite at them
Whom iustice vnto death shall once condem.
I that beheld, how whispering rumour fed
The hungrie eares of euery vulgar head
With her ambiguous voyce; night being come,
Did leaue the *Forum* and returned home;
Where after some repast, with greife oppress
Of these bad dayes, I tooke me to my rest:
And in that silent time, when fullen night
Did hide heau'ns twinckling tapers from our sight,
And on the earth with blackest lookes did lowre,
When euery clocke chimb'd twelue, the midnight houre,
In which imprison'd ghoasts free licence haue
About the world to wander from their graue;
When hungrie wolues and wakefull dogges do howle
At euery breach of aire, when the sad owle
On the house top beating her balefull wings,

A description
of midnight.

And

And fhreeking out her dolefull ditty, fings
 The fong of death, vnto the ficke that lie
 Hopeleffe of health, forewarning them to die:
 Iuft at that houre, I thought my chamber dore
 Did softly open, and vpon the floare
 I heard one glide along, who at the laft
 Did call and bid me wake; at which agaft
 I vp did looke, and loe, a naked man
 Of comely fhape, but deadly pale and wan,

*Sir Thomas Quer-
 buries ghoaft.*



Before

Ouerburies *vision.*

5

Before me did appeare, in whose sad looke,
As in the mappe of griefe or forrowes booke,
My eye did reade such characters of woe,
As neither paintings, skill, nor pen can showe:
With dreadfull horror almost stricken dead
At such a sight, I shrunke into my bed,
But the poore Ghoast to let me vnderstand
For what he came, did waft me with his hand,
And forrowes teares distilling from his eies,
His poyson'd limbs he shew'd, and bad me rise,
Which fearefull I, not daring disobey,
Rose vp and follow'd, while he lead the way
Through many vncouth wayes, he led me on
Ouer that Towers fatall hill, whereon
That scaffold stands, which sithence it hath stood
Hath often lick't vp treafons taynted blood:
Thence ouer that fame wharfe, fast by whose shoares
From Londons bridge the prince of riuers roares,
He in a moments space by wondrous power,
Transported me into that spacious Tower,
Where as we entred in, the very sight
Of that vast building, did my soule affright:

B I

There

6 *Sir Thomas*

There did I call to minde, how or'e that gate,
The chamber was, where vnremorsefull fate

^b*Edward* and his brother the Duke of York. Did worke the falls of those two ^bPrinces dead,
Who by their foes were smothered in their bed.

And there I did behold that fatall greene,
Where famous *Effex* woefull fall was seene:
Where guiltie *Suffolks* guiltlesse daughter *Iane*
The scaffold with her noble blood did staine:
Where royall *Anne* her life to death resign'd,

^c*Queene Elizabeth*. Whose wombe did beare the ^cpraise of women kind:

^d*Margaret Countesse of Salisbury*, daughter of the Duke of Clarence. And where the last ^d*Plantaginet* did pore
Her life out in her blood, where many more,
Whom law did iustly, or vniustly taxe,

Past by the sentence of the bloody axe:
And here as one with suddaine sorrow stroke,
The Ghoast stood still a while, with dolefull looke
Fixt on the ground, and after sad sighes giuen
With eyes and hands vp-lifted vnto heauen,
As calling them to witnesse of his woe,
In sad complaint, his grieffe he thus did shew.

Great God of heauen, that pittiest humane wrongs,
To whom alone reuenge of blood belongs;

Thou

Ouerburies *vision*.

7

Thou, that vpon the wings of heauen do'ft ride,
And laugh'ft to fcorne the man, that feeke to hide
And *ouer-burie* guiltleffe blood in duft,
Thou know'ft the paines of my impoyfon'd ghoaft;
When men more changing then th' inconstant winde,
Or doe not know, or knowing wilfull blinde,
Will not behold dead *Ouerburies* grieve,
But thinke his losse no more then losse of life:
(Ye friends vnkind and false) that after death
Doe let your friendship vanish with the breath
Of him that's dead, and thinke since truth begun
To trie my cause, more satisfaction done
Then all my wrongs require; giue eare, and say
When I haue told my grieve, if from the day
That mans first blood to heauen cri'd out of earth,
For vengeance 'gainst the first mans eldest birth
Vntill this time; if man for life so lost,
More iustly may complaine, then my dead ghoaft.
I was (aye me, that I was euer so)
Belou'd in court, first step to all my woe:
There did I gaine the grace of Prince and Peeres,
Knowne old in iudgement, though but young in years;

And there, as in this Kingdomes garden, where
Both weedes and flowers doe grow, my plant did beare
The buddes of hope, which flowring in their prime
And *May* of youth, did promise fruit in time:
But lust, foule lust did with a hand of blood
Supplant my plant, and crop me in the budde:
Yet to my selfe had I my counsells kept,
Or had I drown'd my cares in rest, and slept,
When I did breake my quiet sleepes, and waite
To serue a false friend, and aduance his state,
I had not met with this inhumane wrong,
But might perhaps haue happy liu'd, and long.
Did euer fortune pinch him with constraint?
That little wealth I had, supply'd his want:
Did euer cares perplex his feeble braine?
What wit I had, his weakenesse did sustaine:
Did euer error make him doe amisse?
What wifedome I had learn'd, was euer his:
My wit, my wealth, and wifedome with good chaunce,
In his great honours May-game, lead the daunce.
I doe not falsly boast the gifts of mind,
Best wittes can iudge, my *Wife* I left behind

Vnto

Ouerburies *vision.*

9

Vnto the world, a witneffe may remaine,
I had no dull conceit, no barren braine:
But as a dogge that at his pray doth ame,
Doth onely loue the water for his game,
Which once obtain'd, he playing then no more,
Shakes off the water when he comes on shore:
So my great Friend, no friend, but my great Foe,
Safe fwimming in that way which I did showe,
Through dangers waters after honours game,
Did fhake me off when I had gain'd the fame.
Vaine man, too late thou do'ft repent my wrong,
That huge great fayle of Honour was too strong
For thy great boate, wanting thy friend to steare:
In this, thy weakenesse and my worth appeare:
O hadst thou kept the path by me begunne,
That other impious race thou hadst not runne:
In wayes of vice thy steps I did not guide,
Onely for vertue *Ouerburie* di'd:
But had ingratitude no further gone,
I had not wail'd with many a piteous grone
These poyfoned limbes; O how will future times
Blufhing to heare fuch execrable crimes

Beleeue report, when then it shall be faid,
Thou waft that man, that man that me betray'd,
That fauage man, that wanting meanes or heart,
Or rather both to meete with my defert,
Too cruell didft deuife to ftop my breath,
To end thy care, and my deare life by death:
Death, oh no death, but thoufand deathes in one,
For had it bin but meere priuation
Of loued life, my greiued Ghoaft had fled
Without fuch paine and anguifh to the dead:
O wretched foes! why did yee take delight
To excercife your hate with fuch defpight
Vpon a guiltleffe man? what had I done?
But that yee might, when as ye firft begunne
Your tragicke plot, and did my life awaite,
With fingle death haue fatisfied your hate?
Was it, ah was it not enough to giue
One poyfon firft, and then to let me liue?
Till ye did pleafe to giue an other, then,
An other, and an other; but as men,
All made of flint, to laugh my plaints to fcorne,
And fcoffe at me, while I alas did mourne:

When

Ouerburies *vision.*

I I

When in my chamber walls, the very stones
Sweat droppes for teares to heare my greiuous grones;
As fenceleffe, they would simpathize my woes,
Though my sad cries were musicke to my foes.
Let ages past vntill the worlds first day,
Shew all records of antique times, and say
If euer any did by poyson die,
That at his death had greater wrong then I.
It was not one dayes space, nor two, nor three,
In which those cruell men tormented me:
Month after month, they often did instill
The diuers natures of that banefull ill
Throughout these limbs; inducing me to thinke,
That what I tooke in Phyficke, meate, or drinke,
Was to restore me to my health; when all
Was but with lingring death to worke my fall.
Oh how my Ghoast doth quake, when it furuayes
This fatall house, where I did end my daies!
And trembles, as it suffered now againe,
Onely to thinke vpon that woefull paine;
When the flow poyson secretly did creepe
Through all my veines, and as it went, did sweepe

All

All ease with paine, all rest with griefe away,
From euery corner of my house of clay:
Then did I loath my life, but could not die,
Sometimes to God, sometimes to men I crie
To giue me ease of my tormenting hell,
Whose paine no pen can write, no tongue can tell:
In vaine my tongue thou vtterd'st forth my cries
To wicked men, with teare-tormented eyes;
In vaine mine eyes in you the teares did stand,
While I to heauen for helpe did lift my hand;
In vaine my hands were ye stretcht forth to heauen,
My time was fet, my life to death was giuen:
Tongue, eyes, and hands did often plead in vaine,
Nothing but death could ease me of my paine:
And death at last to my desire did yeeld,
Who with such furious force did take the field
T'affayle my foule, that 'gainst his matchlesse might,
In greater torment neuer man did fight;
With poison'd dart he at my life did strike,
The venome feazing on me vulture-like,
With torment tore my entrayles; thence did runne
Into my vaines, and boyling there begunne

A fresh

A fresh assault, which beeing a while withstood
 By natures force, at last did seaze my blood:
 Then victor-like, possesse of euery part,
 It did affaile my yet not yeelding heart,
 The foules cheife feate, where hauing vanquish't all
 The powers of life, while I to God did call
 For grace and mercy, after sad sighs giuen
 With greiuous grones, my foule fled hence to heauen.
 O thou sad monument of *Norman* yoke,
 Whose great foundation hee, whose conquering stroke
 Did stoope our neckes to *Norman* rule first laid,
 Looke thy records of those, to death betray'd
 Within thy fatall chambers, and there see
 If any murdered, lost his life like mee.
 Those royall roses of *Plantagine*,
 Which that white boare of *Yorke*, that bloody beast
 Hath rooted vp, within those walls of thine,
 In death felt little paine compar'd to mine:
 Thou knowest that *King*, son to that kingly Knight,
 Beneath whose sword in *Agincourts* great fight,
France fell vpon her knees, thy flore did staine
 With his deare blood, by bloody *Richard* slaine:

e Out of a regi-
 ster booke of
 the acts of the
 Bishop of Ro-
 chester in *Stowes*
suruay.

f *Richard* the
 third.

g *Henry* the sixth.

14 *Sir Thomas*

Thou didst looke on, when *Clarence* blood was shed,
 And didst behold, how hee poore Duke halfe dead,
 Yet bleeding fresh, in Malmesie-but was dround,
 Whose body sithence neuer could be found:

^h Sir *James Tirrell* Thou sawst when ^h *Tirrels* bloody slaues did smother
 This kingdomes vncrownd King, and his young brother:
 Those princely babes of Yorke, thou heardst them crie,
 When they betwixt the sheets did strangled die;
 But to their paine death did swift end assigne,
 Thou know'st their greifes were not so great as mine.
 T'was not for naught, that thy first builders hand

ⁱ *Cemento cum
 sanguine animali-
 um temperato, as
 saith Fitz Ste-
 phens apud Iohan.
 Stow.*

Did temper ⁱ blood with burned lime and sand,
 So to conglutinate thy stony masse,
 And bring the Conquerours will and worke to passe:
 Well may it be, thy walls with blood were built,
 Where so much guiltlesse blood hath since bin spilt.
 But here an end of all my paine and woe,
 Death shuts vp all our greatest greifes, for so
 All men would thinke; but past all thought of minde,
 My greatest greife, alas, is yet behind.
 Oh why should fiercest beast of all the wood,
 When hee hath slaine his foe, and lickt his blood,

End

End hate in death, and man with man in strife,
Not end his malice with the ende of life?
Can they be men and lords of beafts, that beare
Their Makers image, and will yet not feare
That ill, which beafts abhorre in brutifh minde?
Men, O no men, but monfters againft kind:
Such monfters were my tyger-hearted foes,
Who vnremorsefull of my forepaft woes,
When from their cruell hands my foule was fled,
Did with their tongues purfue me beeing dead;
And yet not dead, for heauen fuch grace doth giue,
My foule in heauen, my name on earth doth liue:
My name, as great *Apollo's* flowring bay
Lookes greene when winter clads the earth in gray,
Did flourifh, blowne vpon by fames faire breath,
In euery eye, long time before my death;
When my proud foes of great and glorious name,
Were blafted by the breath of foule defame:
At good report, that on her golden wings
Did beare my name, their tongue like adder-flings
Did fhoot foule flanders poyfon, fo to spill
The fame with foule defame, as they did kill

My body with foule death, that men might loath
My liuing name, and my dead body both,
Falsfe rumour, that mad monster, who still beares
More tongues about with her, then men haue eares,
With scandall they did arme, and sent her out
Into the world, to fspread those lies about;
That those loath'd spots, marks of their poyfning finne,
Which di'd with vgly marble, paint the skinne
Of my dead body, were the marks most iust
Of angry heau'ns fierce wrath for my foule lust:
O barbarous cruelty! oh more then shame
Of shameleffe foes! with lust to blast my name,
When wonder t'was, heauens iudgement did not feaze
Their wanton bodies, with that great difease,
Since death to me by poyson they did giue,
That they in am'rous iolity might liue.
Now when falsfe rumours breath throughout the court
And citty both, had blowne this falsfe report,
Many, that oft before approu'd my name
With praife for vertue, blusht, as if the shame
Of my suppos'd vice, thus giuen forth,
Did argue their weake iudgement of my worth;

My friends look't pale with anger, and my foes
Did laugh, to see too light beleefe cause those
That lou'd me once, to loath that little dust
I left behind me, as a lumpe of lust.
O most inhumane wrong! O endlesse greefe!
O sad redresse! where sorrowes best releefe
Is but dead hope, that helpe may chance be found
With those that liue, to cure my credits wound:
For this, my restless ghoast hath left the graue,
And stole through couert shades of night, to craue
Thy pens assistance, (*O thou mortall wight*)
Whose mournfull Muse, but whilome did recite
Our Brittain Princes, and their wofull fates
In that true (*Mirroure for our Magistrates.*)
O let thy pen paint out my tragicke woe,
That by thy Muse all future times may know
My stories truth, who hearing thy sad song,
At least, may pittie *Ouerburies* wrong.
This said, the grieved ghoast with sighs did cease
His rufull plaints, and as in deepe distresse,
Vnder the *Towersgate* with me he stood,
This accident befell on *Thames* great flood.

South by this house, where on the wharfe fast by
 Those thundering Canons euer ready lie,
 A docke there is, which like a darke some caue
 Archt ouer-head, lets in *Thames* flowing waue,
 Vnder whose *Arch*, oft haue condemned men,
 As through the *Stygian lake*, transported been
 Into this fatall house, which euermore
 For treason hoards vp torturing racks in store:
 At landing of this place, an yron gate
 Locks vp the passage, and still keeping strait
 The guilty prisoners, opens at no time
 But when false treason, or some horrid crime
 Knocks at the same, from whence by lawes iust doome,
 Condemned men but fieldome backe do come:
 (What'ere thou art may chance to passe that way,
 And view that place, vnto thy selfe, thus say;
 God keepe me faithfull to my Prince and state,
 That I may neuer passe this *iron* gate:)
 There in the docke the flood that seem'd to gape,
 Did suddenly giue vp a dreadfull shape,

A man



Wellens ghloft.

A man of megar lookes, deuoy'd of blood,
 Vpon whose face deaths pale complexion stood;
 Of comely shape, and wel compos'd in limme,
 But slender made, of visage sterne and grimme;
 The haire vpon his head and grisly beard
 With age growne hoarie, here and there appear'd;
 Times iron hand with many a wrinckled fret,
 The marks of age, vpon his front had set:

*The description
 of Wellen.*

Yet

Yet as it did appeare, vntimely death
For some foule fact had stopt his vitall breath
With that great flame, which giues offence the checke,
The fatall rope, that hung about his necke:
Trembling vpon his knees in great affright,
When he fast by beheld the poyfned Knight,
He humbly fell, and with sad greife opprest,
Wringing his hands, and beating on his breast,
While forrowes droppes vpon his cheekes did run,
To vtter forth these words, he thus begun.

O worthy Knight, behold the wretched man,
Who thy sad Tragedies first sceane began,
Through whose each act, vnto this last blacke deede,
With bloody minde, vnblest, I did proceede:
My hands, alas, did mixe the poifned food,
Which kindled cruell fire in thy blood;
Mine eares did heare thy lamentable grones,
When the flow-working-poyson wrackt thy bones;
Mine eies without one droppe of forrow shed,
Beheld thee dying, and beheld thee dead;
For which both hands, eyes, eares, and euery part,
Haue suffered death, and conscience bitter smart.

I was

I was that instrument, alas the while,
 By thy great foes instructed to beguile
 Thy lingring hopes their mighty state did whet
 Mee on in mischeife, and their bounty fet
 A golden edge vpon my dull consent,
 At once to worke thy fall, and their content.
 The doctrine of that *whoore*, that would dispence
 With subiects for the murther of a Prince,
 Taught me that lust and blood were slender crimes,
 And he that serues his turne, must serue the times.
 Oh had I neuer knowne that ^k*Doctors* house,
 Where first of that *whoores* cup I did carouse,
 And where disloyalty did oft conceale
 Romes frighted rattes, that ouer seas did steale;
 My thoughts perhaps, had then not giuen way,
 Thy life for gold with poyson to betray.
 But yee that doe, and who doe not condem
 My blacke offences? when yee thinke on them,
 In such imaginations, ponder too
 What with weake man, the power of gold may doe.
 Ye seruile fycophants, whose hopes depend
 On great mens wills; what is the vtmost end

k Doct. Turner.

At which ye aime? why doe ye like bafe curre,
Vpon your Patron fawne? why like his spurres,
Will ye be euer ready at his heeles,
With pleasing words to clawe him, where he feels
The humour itch? or why, will ye fo waite,
As to lie downe and kiffe the feete of state?
And oft expofe your felues to wretched ends,
Loofing your foules to make great men your friends?
Is it not wealth yee feeke? and doth not gold
Ingenuous wittes ofttimes in bondage hold?
The ftout fea-rangers on the fearefull flood,
That hunt about through *Neptunes* waterie wood,
And o're a thoufand rockes and fands, that lie
Hid in the deepe, from pole to pole doe flie;
Who often, when the ftormy Ocean raues,
Fights with fierce thunders, lightnings, winds and waues,
Hauing but one fmall inch of boord, to ftand
Betwixt them and ten thoufand deaths at hand,
Expofe themfelues to all this woe and paine,
To quench the greedy thirft of golden gaine.
O ftong inchauntment of bewitching gold!
For this, the Syre by his owne fonne is fold,

For

For this, the vnkind brother fells the brother,
For this, one friend is often by an other
Betray'd to death; yea euen for this, the wife
Both fells her beauty, and her husbands life:
And I, ay me, for this did worke thy fall
By poyfons helpe, hauing this hope withall,
That great mens greatnes, would haue boren out
My crime, though knowne, against all dangers doubt.
But now too late, my wretched ghoast doth proue,
That his all-seeing eye from heauen aboue,
To whom blacke darkenefse felfe, is far more cleare
Then the bright funne, makes guiltlesse blood appeare
Out of our deepest plots, to murthers fhame,
Though greatest men doe seeke to hide the same.
Ye haplesse instruments of mighty men;
Ye sponges, whom the hands of greatnes, when
That they by you haue wiped out the spot
Of that disgrace, which did their honour blot,
Do squeeze so long, vntill that ye be drie,
And then as needlesse things doe cast ye by:
Where one of these your seruice would imploy,
Our makers heauenly image to destroy,

By violence of death in other men,
Thereby with blood to fatisfie his spleen :
O do not trust the hopes of such a man,
Nor thinke his policie or power can
Hoodwinke all-seeing heauen, nor euer drowne
The crie of blood, which brings swift vengeance downe.
When many men, but one mans life will spill,
Their liues for his, heauen euermore doth will.
Offend in murder, and in murder die,
No crime to heauen, so loud as blood doth crie.
In other wrongs, when man doth man offend,
We restitution may in part pretend :
But where the wrong is done by murthers knife,
No price for blood the Law sayes, life for life.
The eye of wakefull iustice, for a season
May seeme to winke at murthers bloody treason ;
Yet from the houre of so blacke a deede,
The worme of conscience on the foule doth feede ;
And dreadfull furies, whose imagin'd fight
In euery place, doth horribly affright
The guilty man, pursue the steps that flie,
While swift-wing'd vengeance makes the hue and crie.
Iustice to me did seeme to sleepe a while,
And with delay did all my hopes beguile ;
But in short time now in my riper yeares,

When

When grauer age on my gray head appears,
 Death and reproach attach't my life and name,
 To bring me to my graue with greater flame:
 To you therefore that hunger after gold,
 To you, whom hope of great mens grace makes bold
 In any great offence, henceforth let me
 For euermore a sad ensample be.
 This said, he fighing shrunke into the flood,
 And in a moments space, an other flood



Mist. Turners
 ghoast.

The description
of Mift. *Turner.*

In the fame place; but fuch a one whose fight
With more compaffion moou'd the poyfned Knight:
It feem'd that fhee had been fome gentle dame,
For on each part of her faire bodies frame,
Nature fuch delicacie did beftow,
That fairer object oft it doth not fhew:
Her chryftall eye beneath an yuorie brow,
Did fhew what fhee at firft had been; but now
The rofes on her louely cheekes were dead,
The earths pale colour had all ouer-fpread
Her fometimes liuely looke, and cruell death
Comming vntimely, with his wintrie breath
Blafted the fruit, which cherrie-like in fhowe
Vpon her dainty lips did whilome growe:
O how the cruell cord did mif-become
Her comely necke, and yet by Lawes iuft doome
Had been her death: thofe locks like golden thred
That wont in youth t'enfhrine her globe-like head,
Hung careleffe downe; and that delightfull limme,
Her fnow-white nimble hand, that wont to trimme
Their trefses vp, now spitefully did teare
And rend the fame: nor did fhe now forbear

To

To beate that breaft of more then lilly white,
Which sometimes was the lodge of fweete delight:
From thofe two fprings where ioy did whilome dwell,
Griefes pearly droppes vpon her pale cheeks fell,
And after many fighes, at laft with weake
And fainting voyce, fhee thus did filence breake.

Thou gentle Knight, whose wrongs I now repent,
Behold a wofull wretch, that did confent
In thy fad death: for I, alas therefore
By gold my feruant did fuborne to pore
That death into thy cup, thy difh, thy diet,
Whofe paine too long did rob thy ghoaft of quiet:
Yet neither thirft of gold, nor hate to thee
For iniuries receiu'd, incens'd me
To feeke thy life; but loue, deare loue to thofe
That were my friends, and thy too deadly foes:
With them in Court my ftate I did fupport,
Ah, that my ftate had neuer known the Court!
Vertue and vice I there together fawe,
But like the fpider, I was taught to drawe
Foule poyfon, where fweet hony might bee had,
And how to leaue the good, and chufe the bad:

At

At last, through greedy going on in sinne
Made senselesse, by degrees I did beginne
To rise from great to greater, till at last
Mine owne sinnes did mine owne destruction haue.
O heauy doome! when heauen shall so decree,
That sinne in man the plague of sinne must bee.
But here let chastest beauties when they blame
My follies most, and blush to heare my shame,
Remember then best beauties are but fraile,
And how that strongest men do oft assaile
Our weakest selues; so may they pittie me,
And my sad fall may their fore-warning be.
Yee tender offspring of that rib, refin'd
By Gods owne finger, and by him assign'd
To be a helpe, and not a hurt to man;
How is it possible your beauties can
Be pure from blemish, treading such vaine wayes
As now you doe in these prophaner dayes?
Must flesh that is so fraile still feare to fall,
And ye the frailest flesh not feare at all?
Can ye, ah can ye, with vaine thoughts to please
Your wanton foules, on yuorie beddes of ease

Spend

Spend pretious time, and yet suppose in this
Ye doe no ill, nor thinke one thought amisse?
Can ye to catch the wandring thoughts of him
Whom ye affect, decke euery dainty lim,
Powder your haire, and more to please the eye,
Refresh your paler cheekes with purer die,
Lay out your breasts; and in the glasse thus drest,
Obserue what smile, or frowne becomes yee best?
And yet not feare heau'ns iudgement in the end,
At least in this, not thinke ye doe offend?
Can ye on wanton meates to mooue desire,
Though of your selues too full of *Paphian* fire,
Feede euery houre, and when hot blood begins
To hurrie you vnto those horrid finnes,
That spots your beddes, your bodies, and your names,
Blot your blacke foules with many greater blames?
And yet not thinke, ye doe deferue heauens hate,
At least to turne, doe thinke no time too late?
O doe not footh your selues in these foule crimes,
Heare not the tongue of these enchanting times:
Your too much idle ease, which opes the gate
To vitious thoughts, I know is counted state:

Vpon your curious pride and vaine aray,
Fond men the name of cleanlines do lay:
Your lust whose sparkles, in your eyes doe shine,
On wanton youth, is called loue diuine:
Thus they that would for each foule fault excuse you,
And turne your vice to vertue, doe abuse you.
But be ye not so blinded, looke on me,
And let my story in your cloffets be
As the true glasse, which there you looke vpon,
That by my life, ye may amend your owne.
Obserue each step, when first I did begin
To tread the path, that lead from sin to sin,
Vntill my most vnhappy foote did lide,
In guiltlesse blood of this impoisned Knight:
After I had in Court begun to tast
Of idle ease, I daily fedde so fast
Vpon false pleasure, that at last I did
Climbe *Citharæas* hill, like wanton kid
In fertile pastures playing; naught did feare me,
I thought that roaring Lyon would not teare me.
Two darling finnes, too common and too foule,
With their delights did then bewitch my foule;

First

Ouerburies *vision*.

31

Firſt pride aray'd me in her looſe attires,
Fed my fond fancie fat with vaine deſires,
Taught me each faſhion, brought me ouer-feas
Each new deuife, the humorous time to pleaſe:
But of all vaine inuentions, then in uſe
When I did liue, none ſuffer'd more abuſe
Then that phantaſticke vgly fall and ruffe,
Daub'd o're with that baſe ſtarch of yellow ſtuffe:
O that my words might not be counted vaine,
But that my counſell might find entertaine
With thoſe, whoſe ſoules are tainted with the itch
Of this diſeaſe, whom pride doth ſo bewitch,
That they doe thinke it comely, not amiſſe:
Then would they caſt it off, and ſay, it is
The baud to pride, the badge of vanity,
Whoſe very fight doth murther modeſtie,
Ye then deteſting it, they all would knowe,
Some wicked wit did fetch it from belowe,
That here they might expreſſe by this attire
The colour of thoſe wheelles of Stygian fire,
Which prides plug'd ofspring with ſnake-powdred haire,
About their necks in *Plutoes* Court doe weare.

Thus pride, the pandar to luxurious thoughts,
 Did guide me by the hand through those clofe vaults,
 That lead to lufts darke chambers, darke as night,
 The eyes of luft doe ne're abide the light.
 But here perhaps some curious dame, who knowes
 No good, but what her outward habit showes,
 Will iudge my true complaint, as moft vniuft,
 In that I call her pride, the baud to luft:
 But had her bodie windowes in each fide,
 That each one might behold her heart of pride,
 There might one fee the caufe, why ſhe doth trimme,
 Tricke vp, and decke defects in euery limme;
 And hauing feene the fame, may iuſtly fay,
 Her loofe attire doth her loofe mind bewray.
 Of this the ſad effects of yore were ſeene

¹ *Raphael Holli-
 nſhead* in his hi-
 ſtory of Eng-
 land.

In Lady ^k *Alfrith*, ſometimes Englands Queene,
 Whoſe Lord Earle *Ethelwald*, at firſt held deare
 To her affection: when that he did heare
 That his great Sou'raigne, royal *Edgar*, hee
 Whom eight Kings row'd vpon the riuer *Dee*,
 Vnto his houſe did purpoſe to repaire,
 Knowing his deereſt Lady wondrous faire,

And

And the King young and wanton, did desire
That thee would lay aside her rich attire,
And choosung meaner weeds, her art apply
To dimme that beautie which did please the eye:
But thee, inconstant Lady, knowing well,
That beauty most set forth, doth most excell;
As precious stones when they are set in gold,
Are then most faire and glorious to behold;
Araï'd her selfe in all her proud attire,
To set victorious Edgars heart on fire:
Who caught like filly flie into the flame,
At suddaine sight of such a dainty dame,
To coole the heat of his lust-burning will,
Her wronged husbands guiltlesse blood did spill.
With pride thus tasting of that wanton cup
Which lust did giue me, I was giuen vp
To loose desire: which brutish finne, since here
In it's owne shape it may not well appeare,
Least it offend all modest eyes and eares,
I onely doe lament with my true teares:
Yet giue me leaue, in some few words to tell
This wanton world, into what horrid hell

Of wicked finnes, foule lust did make me fall,
That vnchast youth from lust I may recall.
As euery euill humour, which is bred
In humane bodies, couets to be fed
With that ill nutriment which doth increase
The fame, vntill it grow to some diseafe
Incurable; fo did my loofe desire
In vaine delights, feeke fewell for the fire
So long, vntill (aye me) vnto my flame
It did burft forth, and burne me in the flame.
I left my God t'aske counsell of the deuill,
I knew there was no helpe from God in euill:
As they that goe on whooring vnto hell,
From thence to fetch some charme or magicke spell,
So ouer *Thames*, as o're th' infernall lake,
A wherrie with their oares I oft did take,
Who *Charon*-like did waft me to that *Strand*,
Where *Lambeths* towne to all well knowne doth stand;
There *Forman* was, that fiend in humane shape,
That by his art did act the deuills ape:
Oft there the blacke Inchanter, with sad looks
Sate turning ouer his blasphemous bookes,

Making

Making strange characters in blood-red lines:
And to effect his horrible designs,
Oft would he inuocate the fiends below,
In the sad house of endlesse paine and woe,
And threaten them, as if he could compell
Those damned spirits to confirme his spell.
O prophane wretches! ye that doe forsake
Your faith, your God, and your owne soules, to take
Aduise of Sorcerers, againe to finde
Some trifle lost; why will ye be so blind
On some base beldam for lost things to fawne?
To gaine whose losse, ye leaue your soules in pawne.
Too many, too much wronged by the time,
Do thinke this great idolatrie no crime;
But let them marke the path which they do tread,
And they shall see, that in it they are lead
From hope and helpe, to hurt and all annoy,
From him that made, to him that doth destroy.
But without mercie here, let no sterne eye
Looke on my faults; alas for charity,
Let all with pittie my offence bemone,
Since that it was not my offence alone:

The

The strongest foone doe slip, as I did fall,
For woe is me, I was seduc'd to all.
Yee that detest my now detected shame,
And thinke that ye shall neuer meet the same,
Thinke how the friendship, and the auncient loue
Of some great Lady long enioy'd may mooue:
And thinke with that, how much the rising state
Of some great man, my sex might animate:
I was not base, but borne of gentle blood,
My nature of it selfe inclin'd to good,
But wormes in fairest fruit doe soonest breed,
Of heavenly grace best natures haue most neede.
Iust heauen did suffer me, as I begunne
To hasten on from vice to vice, and runne
My selfe in sinnefull race quite out of breath,
That sinne at last might punish sinne by death:
For when those wantons, whose vniust desire
Had vrg'd me on so farre, that to retire
I knew was vaine, as I before to iust
Had beene a minister, so now I must
Ioyne hands in blood, which they did plot and study:
O who would thinke that women-kind were bloody!

But

But when our chaſtitie we doe forgoe,
 That loſt, what then will wee reſuſe to doe?
 This did that Romane proud ^m *Seianus* know,
 Who hating *Drufus* as his deadly foe,
 And baſely ſeeking to betray his life,
 Did firſt allure faire *Liuiæ Drufa's* wife
 To poyſon her owne Lord, that in his ſtead
 The baſe *Seianus* might enioy his bedde;
 Who raiſ'd by *Cæſar* from ignoble place,
 In *Liuiæ's* luſtfull eie did finde more grace
 Then *Drufus*, *Cæſar's* ſonne, a manly youth:
 O who knowes how to feed a womans tooth!
 In miſchiefe I went on, and did agree
 To be an aſtor in thy Tragedie,
 Thou iniur'd ghoaſt; yet was I but a mute,
 And what I did was at an others ſuite:
 Their plots I ſaw, and ſilent kept the ſame,
 For which my life did ſuffer death and ſhame;
 For fee, ah fee, this cord about my necke,
 Which time ſometime with pretious things did decke,
 Reuenge hath done, and Juſtice hath her due,
 Let none then wrong the dead, let all with you
 O gentle knight, forget my great offence,
 Which I haue purg'd with teares of penitence:
 For thouſand liuing eyes with teares could tell,

^m *Tacitus* annals,
 lib. 4. c. 2.

38 *Sir Thomas*

That from my eies true teares of sorrow fell:
Then iudge my cause with charitable minde,
Who mercie seekes with faith, shall mercie finde.
This said, she vanisht from before our sight,
I thinke to heauen, and thinke, I thinke aright.
She gone, the poyson'd ghoast did seeme with teares
To chide her fate: but loe, there straight appears

The Leiftenants
ghoast.



An other in her place, who seem'd to be
 When he did liue, some man of good degree
 Mongst men on earth; one of so solemne looke,
 As if true grauity that place had tooke
 To dwell vpon; his person comely was,
 His stature did the meaner size surpasse;
 Well shapt in euery limme, well stept in yeares,
 As here and there appear'd by some gray haire.
 When first he did appeare, with wofull looke
 He view'd the Tower, and his head he shooke,
 As if from thence he did deriue his woe,
 Which with a sigh he thus begun to shew.

O thou sad building, ominous to those
 Whom with thy fatall walls thou dost inclose,
 For thee, I haplesse man, as for the ende
 Of my desire, did falsly condescend
 Vnto that plot, by others heads begun,
 Through which in thee such wrong was lately done.
 Thou that didst poyson'd feeble thy foes despight,
 See here the ghoast of that vnhappy Knight,
 Which whilome was Leiftenant of this place,
 Though now a wretch, thus haltred with disgrace.

The description
 of Sir Iarvis El-
 lowis, the late
 Leiftenant of
 the Tower.

I was, alas, what boots it that I was,
Of good report, and did with credit passe
Through euery act of my liues tragedie,
Vpon this world the stage of vanity,
Till the last sceane of blood by others plotted,
Concluding ill, my name and credit blotted.
I must confesse I did conuiue at those
That were the ministers to thy proud foes,
Closely employ'd by them thy life to spill
By secret poyson, though against my will:
Feare of their greatnesse, and no hate to thee,
Inforst my coward conscience to agree.
When first to me this plot they did impart,
O what a tedious combate in my heart,
Vnto my foule did feelingly appeare,
T'wixt my sad conscience, and a doubtfull feare:
Feare said that if I did reueale the same,
Those great ones great in grace, would turne the shame
Vpon my head, but conscience said againe,
That if I did conceale it, murders staine
Would spot my foule as much for my consent,
As if at first it had bin my intent:

Feare

Feare said that if the same I did disclose,
The countenance of greatnes I should lose,
And be thrust out of office and of place;
But conscience said that I should lose that grace
And fauour, which my God to me had giuen,
And be perhaps thrust euer out of heauen.
Long these two champions did maintaine the field,
Till my weake conscience at the last did yeild:
O let those men that doe condemne my feare
And follie, most in their remembrance beare,
What certaine danger stood on either side
As I should passe, and how I should haue di'd
In either way, at least with some great fall
For euer haue been cruelt: and thinke withall,
How prone our nature is in feare, to rest
Vpon those seeming hopes that promise best.
I speake not this to mitigate my sinne,
O no, I wish my fall may others winne
From the like feare, and that my life may be
A president to men of such degree,
To whom authoritie doth thinke it fit,
The trust of such a function to commit.

Let such men to remember still be moou'd,
 That which by sad experience I haue proou'd;
 T'is good to feare great men, but yet 'tis better
 Euer to feare God more, since God is greater:
 If Gods good Angel had imprinted this
 Into my thoughts, I had not thought amiffe;
 Nor I, vnhappy I, should haue consented,
 But all this mischeife I had then preuented.
 Here some perhaps will thinke the former race
 Of my sad life, t'haue beene debosht and base,
 Because at last it had so base an ende;
 But for our selues, might modestie contend
 In opposition, I might iustly say,
 How many now liue glorious at this day,
 Whose honour greater stains doe daily spot,
 Then any which my former life did blot:
 Yet those my crimes which did my God offend,
 For which his finger did point out this ende,
 Vnto my life I'le shew, though to my shame,
 That others as from death may flie the fame.

Note. My Father, from whose life my breath I drewe,
 When sicke vpon his bed he lay, and knewe

That

That at his doore of flesh deaths hand did knocke,
And did perceiue weake nature would vnlocke
To let him in, did with his blessing giue
This charge to me; that *I* while *I* did liue
Should neuer seeke for office at the Court,
But with that meanes he left my state support:
With reuerence his will *I* did obey,
Vntill (O that *I* might not tell the day)
In which *I* did with greedy eie affect
That place in this great Tower, without respect
To my dead Syres behest; yet since it was
A touch to conscience, on I would not passe
Vntill by some I was resolu'd amisse,
That as in other things, so I in this
Which in it selfe was of indifference
And lawfull vnto others, might dispence
With my obedience to my Fathers will,
And that mine owne intent I might fulfill:
Yet one there is (O euer may he be
Belou'd of heau'n for his great loue to me)
Who by the light of truth did shew the way
Which I should goe, but I did not obay:

Ambitious mift did blinde my weaker eyes,
I thought by this preferment I should rife;
Yet no defert but gold did gaine me grace,
Mine owne corruption purchaf'd me that place:
For brib'rie in the foule a blemifh makes
Of him that giues, as well as him that takes,
And bribing hands that giue, muft guiltie be
Of their owne want of worth: for who, but hee
That in himfelfe the want of merit findes,
Will be the baude to bafe corrupted mindes?
Ye, that neglect performance of the will
Of your dead parents, thinking it no ill
To difobey their precepts, now in me
The curfe of difobedience ye may fee:
And yee whose golden fingers, as in fport,
Like lime-twigges catch at offices in Court,
In which obtain'd ye euer after liue
Corrupt in minde, to gaine what ye did giue;
Behold, vntimely deaths difgracefull corde
About this necke, my bribing hands reward.
Before this fuddaine, and vnlookt for fate
Did fall thus heauy on me, when my ftate

Note.

Did flourish among men, to mind I call
 An accident of note which then did fall.
 Bewicht with loue to that too common vice
 In this our age, of hazardy and dice,
 I loosing once my coine (for few thereby
 Haue euer gainers beene) did wish that I
 When I againe did vse the dice, might come
 To die this shamefull death, which by the doome
 Of righteous heau'n, againe I vsing game,
 As I had wisht, to mee vnlook't for came.
 Vaine gamesters that too commonly vse
 Strange deprecations, when ye doe abuse
 Your felues in game, by my sad fall take heede,
 And let your word be euer as your deede;
 Least your hand meete mine in the selfe-same dish,
 For heau'n doth often heare when men doe wish.
 But of no sinne had my most sinnefull foule
 Beene euer sicke, yet this one sinne most foule,
 This act of poyson, to my house a staine,
 With future times for euer shall remaine:
 The die of blood on murderers hand doth stay,
 No teares, no time, can wipe the same away;

But if true teares of sorrow may with you,
(As all true sorrowes teares with heauen may doe)
Moooue pittifull regard of my fad fall,
Ye then remembring how I fell withall,
Will out of charity, with leffer blame
Cenfure my fault, when ye fhall heare the fame:
Thus quit by death from doome of Law, and heauen
Out of free mercy hauing me forgiuen,
Let all calumnious tongues their mallice ceafe,
That fo my foule may euer liue in peace:
O let the world abate her fharpned tongue,
And fince I haue done pennance for thy wrong
Thou wronged Knight, what can thy ghaft now craue?
Griue thee no more, goe reft thee in thy graue:
Thy foes decline, proud *Gauefton* is downe,
No wanton *Edward* weares our *Englands* crowne.
This faid, he vanifht; and an other flood
In the fame place, midway aboue the flood,

Whofe

Franklins ghoast.



Whose strange demeanour with amazement strooke
 Vs that beheld him; for with startled looke,
 And haire stiffe standing, as a man agast
 He star'd vpon the Knight, from whom in hast
 Into the flood he would haue shrunke away,
 Had not, I thinke, that fury forst his stay,
 Which while he liu'd his guilty soule purfu'd,
 Till he his owne offence had freely shew'd.

The description
 of *Franklin*.

G 2

A man

But if true teares of forrow may with you,
(As all true forrowes teares with heauen may doe)
Mooue pittifull regard of my sad fall,
Ye then remembering how I fell withall,
Will out of charity, with leffer blame
Cenfure my fault, when ye fhall heare the fame:
Thus quit by death from doome of Law, and heauen
Out of free mercy hauing me forgiuen,
Let all calumnious tongues their mallice ceafe,
That fo my foule may euer liue in peace:
O let the world abate her sharpned tongue,
And fince I haue done pennance for thy wrong
Thou wronged Knight, what can thy ghoaft now craue?
Grieue thee no more, goe reft thee in thy graue:
Thy foes decline, proud *Gauefton* is downe,
No wanton *Edward* weares our *Englands* crowne.
This faid, he vanifht; and an other flood
In the fame place, midway aboue the flood,

Whofe

*Franklins ghoast.*

Whose strange demeanour with amazement strooke
 Vs that beheld him; for with startled looke,
 And haire stiffe standing, as a man agast
 He star'd vpon the Knight, from whom in hast
 Into the flood he would haue shrunke away,
 Had not, I thinke, that fury forst his stay,
 Which while he liu'd his guilty soule pursu'd,
 Till he his owne offence had freely shew'd.

The description
 of *Franklin*.

Him at the first, forfakes that happie way,
Which he should go, and haplesse runnes astray:
Diseaf'd with vanities fantasticke fittes,
Which ague-like doth vex our English wittes,
Who thinke at home all homely, and doe plough
Deepe furrowes vpon *Neptunes* waterie browe,
From forreine shoares to bring the worst of bad,
And in exchange leaue there what good they had;
The seas I past to helpe out my weake skill
In th' *Aromatike* Art, but O the ill,
Which there our ignorant English oft do finde,
Did first corrupt my vncorrupted minde:
O vaine conceit of those, that doe repute
In euery Art the most admired fruite
Of any braine; if of domesticke wit,
But base and triuiall, if compar'd to it
Of forreine heads, that onely vs can please,
And such hath beene our Englands old disease:
There did I finde, O neuer had I found,
Murthers close way to kill my foe, the ground
Of that deuise (thou wronged Knight) whereby
Thou most vntimely wert inforst to die:

There

Ouerburies *vision.*

51

There was I taught, with vaine words to command
The spirits from below, who still at hand
Will ready bee, as seeming to obey
Those foule-blind men, whom they doe most betray.
Thus hauing, as I thought, my minde enricht
With deepest knowledge, and with pride bewicht,
To blow that vaine blast on the trumpe of fame,
Which through the world I thought might bear my name,
I backe return'd for *England*, there to shoue
That wondrous skill, which I would seeme to knowe:
There as the Fowler doth with whistle call
The filly birds, vntill they hap to fall
Into his net; so did my name each day,
Once blowne abroad, lead simple fooles away
From helpfull heauen, to seeke aduise in hell,
And there for toyes themselues and foules to sell:
But in this path long thus I did not tread,
Which downe vnto the house of death doth lead,
Before that old flie serpent did beginne
T' entice me, to that selfe-accusing-finne
Of horrid murther, shewing me the way
By art of poyson, closely to betray

What

What life to death I would, nor did he leaue
Vntill my foule he did fo farre bereaue
Of euery feeling fenſe, that wicked I
Did cloſely poyſon her, that w'd to lie
In mine owne boſome, that ſhee beeing dead
Might to me liuing leaue an empty bed:
After this fact, that to my gultie foule
It might not as it was, ſeeme vgly foule
My ſubtile foe did whiſper in my eare
Theſe ſeeming happy newes, how fame did beare
My name vpon her wings, with loud report
Of my ſtrange deedes as farre as to the Court;
Where hauing beene employ'd, I with all ſkill
Apply'd my ſelfe to pleaſe; no damned ill
I did reſuſe, not making any doubt
While greatneſſe wings did compaſſe me about.
Forman that cunning Exorcift and I,
Would many times our wicked wits apply
Kind nature in her working to difarme
Of proper ſtrength; and by our ſpels would charme
Both men and women, making it our ſport
And play, to point at them in our report.

Thus

Thus fatted with false pleasure for a while,
 Still with good hope of hap, I did beguile
 My selfe in all imployments, till at last
 Thy death (thou iniur'd Knight) did with it haſt
 My vnexpected fall: I was the man,
 That did prepare thoſe poyſons, which began
 And ended all thy paine, which I did giue
 Vnto that man, who did attendant liue
 On thee in thy diſtreſſe, who ſince that time
 Was he, that firſt did ſuffer for this crime.
 O what a ſuddaine change of cheerefull thought
 To ſadneſſe, ſelfe-accuſing conſcience brought
 After this bloody deed: before all eaſe
 Did ſeeme to waite on me; for what could pleaſe
 Which I did want? that idol gold, which all
 Or moſt men cloſely worſhip, ſeem'd to fall
 As thicke vpon me, as the golden ſhower
 That fell on *Danae* in the *Dardan* Tower.
 Swimming in ſtreames of false delight, and prickt
 With pride and ſelfe conceit, at heau'n I kickt:
 The names of God, and Maker, I did fleight
 As bug-beare words the childiſh world t' affright:

Weſton.

H 1

I did

I did impute the fpheares eternall daunce,
And all this all, to nature and to chaunce;
But all men laugh my follies vnto fcorne:
For who fo blinde, will fay being mortall borne,
He hath a reafon, and will yet denie
The fame to this *Vniuerfalitie*,
Of which, alas, he is the leffer part:
As who fhould fay, his feete, his hands, his heart
Might well be wife, and he himfelfe a foole,
Such is the wifedome of th' Atheifticke fchoole.
The eye of heau'n, from whome no heart can hide
The fecret thoughts, my clofe intents efp'd;
And when I did with moft inuentiue braine,
Deuife to wipe away my confcience ftaine,
And thy fad death moft clofely to conceale,
Heauen forc'd my felfe, my owne felfe to reueale:
The fhadowe of the dead, or fome foule fiend,
Or furie, whom reuenge did iuftly fend
To punifh me for my detefted fin,
With fnakie whippes did fcouge my foule within;
Forbidding me my reft, or day, or night,
Till I had brought mine owne offence to light:

For

For which condemn'd vnto that shamefull end
Of strangling torment, still the franticke fiend
Did follow me vnto my liues last breath;
As was my life before so was my death.
This said, he vanisht, and with him that night
The vision ending, our empyfoned Knight
Thus spake: O *England*, O thrife happie land,
Who of all Iles most gracefully doft stand
Vpon this earths broad face, like *Venus* spot
Vpon her cheeke; thou onely garden plot,
Which as an other *Eden* heau'n hath chofe,
In which the tree of life and knowledge growes:
Happie in all, most happie in this thing,
In hauing fuch a holy, happy King;
A King, whose faith in armes of prooffe doth fight,
'Gainft that feuen-headed beaft, and all his might:
A King, whose iuftice will at laft not faile,
To giue to each his owne in equall fcale:
A King, whose loue doue-like with wings of fame,
To all the world doth happy peace proclame:
A King, whose faith, whose iuftice, and whose loue,
Diuine, and more then royall, him doe prooue:
O thou iuft King, how hath thy iuftice fhin'd
Vpon my iniur'd ghoaft, which beeing confi'nd
From hence for euer, neuer had, vnleffe

56 *Sir Thomas, &c.*

Thy iustice had beene great, obtain'd redresse.
 If earnest prayers with heau'n may ought auayle,
 And earnest prayers with heau'n doe fieldome fayle;
 Let all good men lift vp their hearts with me,
 That what I beg, of heau'n may granted be.
 If euer heart with wicked thought, shall aime
 To harme thy State, let heau'n reueale the fame:
 If euer hand lift vp with violent powre
 Shall seeke thy life, heauen cut it off that houre:
 If euer eye of treason lurke about,
 Or lie in waite for thee, heau'n put it out:
 If heart, hand, eye, abroad or here at home,
 Shall plot against thee, neuer may they come
 To their effect, as they haue euer been
 So may they be; and let all fay, *Amen.*

Here my dreame ended, after which a while
 Soft slumber did my senses so beguile,
 I thought the Tower gate was o're my head,
 Vntill I wak't and found my selfe in bed;
 From whence arising, as the wronged Knight
 Had giuen in charge, this Vision I did write.

FINIS.







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Niccols, Richard
Sir Thomas Overburies
vision

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